

REMARKS

In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, favorable reconsideration and allowance of the above application is respectively sought.

There are now pending in this application Claims 1, 2, 4-7, 9, and 10, of which Claims 1, 6, 7, 9 and 10 are independent. Claims 3, 8 and 11-16 have been canceled.

Claim 9 was objected to because of a minor informality. The claim as been amended to correct this matter.

Claims 13-16 were provisionally rejected on the ground of non-statutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 13-16 of U.S. Patent Application No. 10/686,579. That rejection has been obviated by the cancellation of those claims.

Claims 1-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0171743 to Kimizuka et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,796,839 to Ishiguro. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection for the reasons discussed below.

As recited in independent Claim 1, the present invention includes, *inter alia*, the features of (i) repeatedly forming one spatial rectangle region group from a plurality of adjacent spatial rectangle regions and another spatial rectangle region group from a plurality of adjacent spatial rectangle region groups so as to define a hierarchical structure of spatial rectangle region groups, . . . thereby defining a tree structure that has as nodes the respective spatial rectangle region groups, the respective spatial rectangle regions, and the respective partial encoded data, (ii) assigning identification information uniquely identifying each node to each node in the hierarchical structure, and (iii) executing processing for generating encryption key information for a node of interest on the basis of encryption key information generated for a node located at an upper layer, identification information assigned to the node of interest, and a one-way function.

Applicant submits that the cited art fails to disclose or suggest at least these features. Ishiguro merely discloses generating a new key for enabling the use of computer software having

a new version, using a key of the previous version of the software and a one-way function. There is nothing in that reference related to generating encryption key information for a node of interest based on encryption key information for a node located at an upper layer of a hierarchical structure, identification information assigned to the node of interest, and a one-way function.

Kimizuka fails to remedy these deficiencies. That patent is also silent about generation of encryption key information as recited in Claim 1, i.e., using identification information assigned to the node of interest. Moreover, Applicant submits that there is no reasons that one skilled in the art would modify either of the cited documents in view of the other to obtain the claimed invention.

Accordingly, Applicant submits that the present invention recited in Claim 1 is patentable over the art of record. The other independent claims recite features similar to Claim 1 and are believed patentable for reasons similar to Claim 1.

The dependent claims are believed patentable for at least the same reasons as the independent claims, as well as for the additional features they recite.

Applicant respectfully submits that all outstanding matters in the above application have been addressed and that this application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and early passage of the above application is respectfully sought.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian L. Klock", is written over a horizontal line.

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